

Message Text

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72-60

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4380

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 8501

LIMDIS

FOR FRANK ORTIZ ARA/APU

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, AR

SUBJECT: LABOR PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION

1. TRANSMITTED BY SEPTTEL TODAY ARE OUR OBSERVATIONS ON AIFLD COUNTER PROPOSALS. WE BELIEVE OBSERVATIONS ARE FULLY ADEQUATE TO SUBSTANTIATE OUR POSITION THAT CONTINUED USG FINANCING OF AIFLD ACTIVITIES IN ARGENTINA, EITHER BILATERAL OR REGIONAL, IS NEITHER NEEDED NOR DESIRABLE. FOR YOUR BACKGROUND INFORMATION IN DISCUSSING MATTER WITH AIFLD, YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT OUR OPPOSITION GOES FAR BEYOND ANY DIFFERENCE OF OPINION ON HOW BEST TO ADVANCE OUR LABOR POLICY.

2. AIFLD HAD A ROLE TO PLAY IN ARGENTINA WHEN THERE WAS A DEVELOPMENTAL JUSTIFICATION FOR ITS ACTIVITIES. HOWEVER, EVEN WERE THERE A BILATERAL AID PROGRAM IN ARGENTINA, DEVELOPMENTAL GROUNDS WOULD NO LONGER EXIST FOR A LABOR PROGRAM. THE ARGENTINE LABOR MOVEMENT HAS THE MEANS AND RESOURCES TO CARRY OUT ANY EFFORTS ALONG THAT LINE AND, IN FACT, IS PRESENTLY PROCEEDING WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ITS OWN TRADE UNION SCHOOLS. UNDER ARGENTINE LAW THE

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UNIONS HAVE ACCESS TO, AND ACTUALLY CONTROL, FUNDS

NEEDED TO FURTHER ANY WORTHWHILE SOCIAL PROJECT. IN THE ABSENCE OF DEVELOPMENTAL JUSTIFICATION, POLITICAL GROUNDS ARE NOW BEING ADVANCED TO JUSTIFY FUTURE USG FUNDING OF AIFLD ACTIVITIES. WE ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT THAT THERE IS A NEED OR ANY JUSTIFICATION FOR AIFLD, OR ANY OTHER USG CONTRACT ORGANIZATION, TO PROMOTE USG POLITICAL OBJECTIVES IN ARGENTINA. THE REPLY TO AIFLD EFFORTS TO JUSTIFY CONTINUATION OF ITS EFFORTS ON POLITICAL GROUNDS IS THAT THE VARIOUS MISSION COMPONENTS CONCERNED WITH OUR POLITICAL ACTIVITIES ARE FULLY CAPABLE OF CARRYING OUT THOSE ACTIVITIES, WITHIN THE LIMITS PRESCRIBED BY LOCAL ATTITUDES. AIFLD'S ATTEMPT TO MINGLE POLITICAL WITH LABOR OBJECTIVES, BESIDES BEING SELF-SERVING IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, ALSO RUNS THE REAL RISK OF AN INCIDENT WHICH WOULD GIVE UNFRIENDLY ELEMENTS AMMUNITION WITH WHICH TO ATTACK US AND POSSIBLY LEAD TO REAL DAMAGE TO OUR BROADER INTERESTS.

3. EVEN IF WE FELT THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL EXPERTISE IN OUR POLITICAL/LABOR ACTIVITIES, WE WOULD NOT SEEK THAT EXPERTISE FROM AIFLD. AD DEPARTMENT AWARE, AIFLD OPERATES VERY INDEPENDENTLY, AND MISSION ATTEMPTS TO EXERT POLICY CONTROL OVER IT ARE ACCEPTED ONLY HALF-HEARTEDLY BY AIFLD, WHICH SCORNS MISSION "INTRO-MISSION" INTO "ITS AFFAIRS." IT INTERPRETS ITS ACTIVITIES ONLY WITH REFERENCE TO ITS OWN CONCEPT OF WHAT US LABOR SHOULD BE DOING, AND HAS SHOWN ITSELF INCAPABLE OF UNDERSTANDING THE SENSITIVE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ITS ACTIVITIES FOR OVERALL US POLICY AND INTERESTS. THEREFORE, WE DO NOT LOOK WITH FAVOR ON ANY AIFLD PROGRAM WHICH HAS ITS BASE IN POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION.

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